



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 22, 2020

20-044

Hawai'i Department of Health issues guidance to restaurants, retail food markets and food manufacturers to support the state's recovery efforts

HONOLULU -- After being prohibited from offering dine-in service for the past two months, Hawai'i restaurants will now gradually begin to reopen their doors to customers, aligning with the state's Roadmap to Recovery and Resilience. To further guide the food service industry, the Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) has developed detailed guidance on safe practices for reopening.

The DOH issued recommendations for Hawai'i's food sector today to reduce the risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19 to employees and customers. The guidance aligns with all existing food safety regulations and supports ongoing compliance with social distancing requirements. The guidance also aligns with Gov. David Ige's eighth supplementary proclamation in response to the current emergency issued May 18, which focuses on the state's multi-phased roadmap to recovery and resilience.

"As we move from reopening to recovery, safe practices in the food service industry play a vital role in the reopening and rebuilding of our local economy," said Health Director Bruce Anderson. "We are also asking customers to do their part by following the guidance to support our restaurants and help ensure they can continue to stay open."

During this initial recovery stage, we're urging restaurants to act with care and continue to meticulously follow safe practices," said Keith Kawaoka, deputy director of environmental health, who oversees the area of food safety. "The Department of Health encourages food operators to promote good hygiene practices by ensuring adequate supplies of soap, individual disposable towels, and hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol for employees and customers. Any employee who exhibits signs of illness should not be allowed to report to work."

At a minimum, customers are required to wear a cloth face covering when moving through a food establishment or while waiting for a pick-up order, and their masks may be removed only while eating.

In addition, the Department of Health issued the following additional stipulations for dine-in service:

- No more than 50 percent or half of the total seating capacity should be available for dining-in use.
- Dining tables at least six feet apart for indoors and outdoors. (Outdoor seating does not count toward the total seating capacity.)
- Restaurants are encouraged to require reservations for dine-in service for greater control of customer volume.
- Consider allowing customers to pre-order while making reservations to decrease the length of time they are in the establishment.
- Maximum of six customers, not living in the same household, per group per table, with a maximum of 10 customers, living in the same household, per group per table.
- No self-service salad bar or buffet.
- Restaurants should also post signage at the entrance that states that no one with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19 will be permitted in the restaurant.

Kawaoka said that as the state moves toward the next phase of recovery, the health department plans to increase the recommended dining capacity for restaurants to 75 percent of total seating capacity while still keeping dining tables at least six feet apart.

The Department of Health also issued guidance for retail food markets, limiting the number of people in a facility up to 50 percent of fire code occupancy and maintaining a minimum of six feet between individuals. In the next phase, the recommended number of people in a retail food market increases to up to 75 percent of fire code occupancy, while continuing to maintain a minimum of six feet between individuals.

Restaurants offering dine-in service, retail food markets, and food processors and manufacturers are urged to identify a workplace coordinator to be responsible for COVID-19 assessment and control planning, which includes the use of face masks by employees, screening of workers, frequent handwashing, cleaning and disinfection procedures, and display of clear signage to remind employees and customers to adhere to all safety policies in place.

The health department will continuously monitor and evaluate conditions, and determine whether to expand reopening guidance or return to restrictions based on disease activity and the preparedness of our response system to manage any resurgence of positive cases.

For a complete list of requirements for restaurants, retail food markets and food processors and manufacturers in the [State Roadmap to Recovery and Resilience: Guidance for Reopening the Food Service Sector \(PDF\)](#), DOH Food Safety Branch: health.hawaii.gov/san/, and DOH Food and Drug Branch: health.hawaii.gov/food-drug.

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